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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached replacement sheet of drawings includes changes to Fig. 8.

In Fig. 8, a “Prior Art” legend has been added.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet(s)

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough review of the present application, and respectfully request reconsideration in light of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-2 and 19-34 are pending in the application. Non-elected claims 3-18 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1-2 have been amended to better define the claimed invention. New claims 19-34 readable on the elected invention (i.e., method) have been added to provide Applicants with the scope of protection to which they are believed entitled. The amended/new claims find solid support in the original specification and drawings, e.g., FIGs. 6D-6E, 7, paragraphs 0049-0050 especially page 34, lines 16-22, page 38, lines 7-12, page 40, line 20, page 41, lines 9-14, and the sentence bridging pages 41-42. No new matter has been introduced through the foregoing amendments.

The objections to the specification and FIG. 8, as well as the *35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph* rejection of claims 1-2 are believed overcome in view of the above amendments.

The *35 U.S.C. 102(b)* rejection of claims 1-2 as being anticipated by *JP '430* is noted. *JP '430* has been discussed in the Background Art section of the instant application and is believed to be patentably distinguishable from the invention as defined in the original claims. Notwithstanding, amendments have been made to specifically avoid the rejection, solely for the purpose of expediting prosecution.

In particular, independent claim 1 now recites, among other things, that "the specified amount of torque [given to the preceding knife and the following knife] is generated based on the cutting torque necessary for the knives to cut off the web having a basic weight and being fed at a web feeding speed." The added feature finds support in at least paragraphs 0049-0050 of the specification as filed, especially page 34, lines 16-22. The cited portions of *JP '430* do not appear

to fairly teach or disclose the now claimed invention, and therefore, amended independent claim 1 is patentable over the reference as applied by the Examiner.

The dependent claims, including new claims 19-24, are considered patentable at least for the reason(s) advanced with respect to independent claim 1.

As to claim 24, the reference as applied by the Examiner does not appear to fairly teach or disclose the feature that “the torque given to the preceding knife by the preceding knife driving motor and the torque given to the following knife by the following knife driving motor have opposite signs when the web is being cut and have the same sign when the web is not being cut.” The claim feature finds support in at least FIGs. 6D-6E which show that when the web is being cut (tc-to) the torques applied to the knives have opposite signs (Txa is “+” and Txb is “-”), and when the web is not being cut (before tc and after to) the torques applied to the knives have the same sign (i.e., Ta and Tc, Tb and Td).

New independent claim 25 is directed to a method of cutting off a web having a basic weight and being fed at a web feeding speed between a preceding knife cylinder that carries on a peripheral surface thereof a preceding knife and a following knife cylinder that carries on a peripheral surface thereof a following knife, said method comprising: determining an amount of cutting torque (Txa+Txb) necessary for the knives to cut off the web, based on the basic weight and the feeding speed of the web; and while the web is being cut, driving the following knife and the preceding knife respectively with a first torque component Txa and a second torque component Txb of the cutting torque in the direction in which the preceding knife and the following knife are pressed against each other; wherein the first torque component Txa and the second torque component Txb have opposite signs. The reference as applied by the Examiner does not appear to teach or disclose at least the highlighted claim feature.

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The new dependent claims, i.e., new claims 26-34, are considered patentable at least for the reason(s) advanced with respect to independent claim 25. The dependent claims are also patentable on their own merits since these claims recite other features neither disclosed, taught nor suggested by the applied art, as will be apparent to the Examiner upon reviewing these claims.

Each of the Examiner's rejections has been traversed. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Early and favorable indication of allowance is courteously solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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